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Review

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art, who devote their lives to the investigation of humble matters, but who bring to their aid all the resources of education. Men who take, perhaps, a humble ballad as a theme, and invest it with the glow of classic lore. These men find a stone and leave a diamond. Others there are who become fascinated with the charm of the diction of the casual reporter, *vulgo dicto* "penny-a-liner," and find their best modes of expression in rhodomontade and metonymy. Fire is "a devouring element," water falling from an overturned pail "rushes with an uncontrolled impetuous force," the noise of a sack of coals cast down a shoot "rends the air with deafening reverberations," and so forth. Our author offers "the outcome of practical experience" in a manner only equalled by the process adopted by those who desire to instruct the female ancestor of one of their parents in the art of extracting the albuminous and other contents of the ovum of the *gallus domesticus*, by the process of imbibition. When we are told in the grandiloquent descriptions of the three oratorios named above, that the Hallelujah Chorus, Niagara-like, defies description, that in Mendelssohn's "and he went by a whirlwind into heaven," "one is almost borne away by the impetuosity of this resistless Tone-tempest," or that "the fact that our popular taste has clung to works like these, testifies to a latent musical capacity which, laid bare by more diligent practice and study," we are humbled by a superior presence in literature, and we feel crushed and humiliated, and find how hollow everything else written on the subject of music has been. In mercy to that which exists, we implore the author to give no more "Notes and Notions" for the present, lest we be absolutely annihilated; for, insects as we are, our lives are sweet to us.

The Choral Society. By L. C. Venables.
[Curwen and Sons.]

In this neatly printed little book there are some twenty-three chapters setting forth the various details of the formation and conduct of choral societies, with directions and instructions for their business management and so forth. There are also instructions concerning the choice and classification of voices, the direction of rehearsals, the selection of music, arrangement of programmes, the management of concerts, the engagement of soloists, tuning, accompaniments, how to retain members, choral competitions, men's voice societies, hints to conductors, and a number of other matters of a valuable and useful character. The whole is probably derived from experience, and although the matters cannot in the nature of things sublimely be made applicable to all cases, those who are interested in the subject and are seeking some such work for their own guidance will doubtless be able to adapt the suggestions to fit their own requirements. In this respect the little book will be found most useful and handy, and may be safely recommended for perusal and preservation. There are many interesting references to work done at home and abroad, but they can only be regarded as of lesser importance compared with the practical part of the book. The writer has much to say about the Tonic Sol-fa notation, and its advocated advantages. This is of course to be expected, but his book will be more sought after for his commonsense remarks concerning the formation and maintenance of choral societies than for the expression of his own and other views on the subject of musical systems.

Come now, and let us reason. By Herbert W. Wareing.
(Octavo Anthems, No. 314.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

ALTHOUGH the composer of this anthem is a musical graduate, it contains very little display of counterpoint, melodic interest being apparently his principal aim. Thus it commences with a flowing chorus in 6-4 time, to which succeeds a very expressive soprano (or tenor) air and chorus, a third chorus somewhat like the first, but rather more vigorous, bringing the work to an effective conclusion.

Alternative Tunes to Familiar Hymns. By John A. Macmeikan, M.A. [Hart and Co.]

THIS is a series of some twenty-two tunes to words already associated with other melodies. They are well and thoughtfully written, and may be used as a change by those who admit the pleasure arising from variety.

Album of Short Classical Pieces, for Piano. Arranged and Fingered by William Smallwood. [Joseph Williams.]

ALL persons who desire that young pianists should become acquainted with classical pieces will, we are certain, welcome a collection of the minor works of the great composers in a cheap form; and we must say that in the Album before us are some well chosen little gems, carefully arranged and fingered. But we must object to presenting fragments of compositions without any acknowledgment that they are fragments. For example, one page, containing merely the theme of Dussek's well-known piece, is headed "La Consolation—Dussek." In another volume of similar character, noticed by us some short time since, the whole of the composition, minus the Introduction, was given. Now in either of these cases how can a juvenile student become acquainted with the piece as Dussek wrote it? It may be said that masters would probably explain the matter to their pupils; but many professors would not think of doing so; and it must also be remembered that amateurs purchase these Albums, and play their contents without any communication with a teacher. The objection we have named also applies with considerable force to the extract called "Andante in F—Beethoven," which (apart from its conveying no idea that it commences a lengthy piece) having no distinctive title—save to musicians, who are accustomed to hear it so-named—is likely to be confounded with any other Andante in F by the same composer. Some of the little pieces, however, are complete in themselves, and all are abstractedly excellent themes to linger over.

The Treasury. Compiled and edited by Joseph B. Mead.
[Published by the Trustees.]

IT is pleasant to note that the great reform in the music of the sanctuary which has taken place in the Church of England within the last generation or two is now finding its echo in the ranks of dissent. That our Nonconformist brethren were somewhat slow to move in this matter was by no means surprising, for many reasons; but they now seem fairly alive to the necessity of keeping with the times, and have apparently grasped the truth that music, to be reverential, need not be wholly inartistic. The present work, intended primarily for the use of the Baptist denomination, consists of over 600 tunes, and a few chants, anthems, &c. From the preface we gather that few of the tunes appear for the first time, but the collection is very comprehensive, and the editing shows a praiseworthy amount of musicianly care and taste. It is said that "a very few have been included more from their general popularity and the hold they have obtained than from their intrinsic musical value." This probably refers to such tunes as Helmsley, Miles Lane, &c., in which case it does not matter very much, as there are alternatives to these vulgar melodies. But is it possible that any devotional feeling can still be aroused by such trivial, flippant compositions as Jackson's Te Deum in F, "I will arise," and "Vital spark"? These survivals from the dark days of sacred music might surely be replaced by worthy pieces—if not by modern composers, at any rate by our grand old composers, such as Tallis, Farrant, Bird, or Gibbons.

Albums for Violin and Pianoforte. (No. 6.) *Hungarian Dances.* Transcribed by Siegfried Jacoby.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IT is safe to prophesy that there will be a large demand for this welcome addition to the Novello Albums. The book contains eight examples of Hungarian dance melodies, each of which may be found in the selection arranged for four hands, by Brahms, and, subsequently, by Joachim for violin and pianoforte. If it be asked why, since Joachim has transcribed the themes for the same instruments, Mr. Jacoby has done a superfluous deed, the answer is that there are players and players. The great violinist's version presents difficulties which are prohibitive to the vast majority of amateurs; Mr. Jacoby, on the other hand, has taken the beautiful tunes, laid them out simply, with an equally unexacting accompaniment, and so placed them within the reach of very moderate performers. That they will be extensively used and much valued in amateur circles we do not for a moment doubt.